



REVIATHAN

FACILITATION KIT



BOOK 2 : THE SEASONS

The Seasons is the second in a series of six futuristic, fantasy-fiction books, *Reviathan*. They recount the lives of young adults who go through a rite of passage to become fully contributing members of their tribe, each using their unique evolved gifts to succeed. Staged in the year 2093, after an environmental cataclysm, the remaining tribes are rebuilding a new utopic civilization that they fondly baptised as Reviathan.

Reviathan was inspired to support teens to gain self-knowledge and build respect for diversity. Nadia uses Fantasy-Fiction as a way of engaging teens in a magical world so that learning about self and others becomes accessible and fun. It was inspired by Process Communication Model (PCM) which was used by NASA to profile astronauts to ensure they were compatible before sending them into space together where they would be subject to immense stress. It's a model that helps us understand our psychological needs and why others might not have the same needs we do. When we can soothe our own needs it's very empowering and avoids potential conflict.



It is set in the year 2093, at the dawn of a new civilisation called Reviathan. The point is not to emphasise the ecological consequences of our current choices, even if it does raise these questions, but more to ask our young people to explore their own views : **“if we were to start to rebuild a new society, what would it look like ideally and how would you use your gifts to contribute? What is most important to you?”**

The Seasons tribe are responsible for humanity's food and resource production. In book 2, Draydon, a Younger, doesn't feel comfortable in most social settings and is having difficulty finding his place. He prefers to spend his time dreaming, drawing, and composing music. When he was young, he felt more inspired and he's wondering where his enthusiasm went. His rite of passage “the sun ceremony” is approaching fast and he feels pressured to conform to the tribe's expectations or to be something he's not. He doesn't feel ready or good enough. What will it mean to him to become an adult and a responsible member of the Seasons tribe? He would soon find out. He often wanders off to the nearby hills to be alone where he can think or just be free. There he comes across Rethia who lives in the “outliers encampment” of Seasons.

THEMES TO SHARE

Educational objectives :

- Develop a sense of being an active member of society
- Bring awareness to the question of diversity - cultivate intellectual curiosity about different cultures, preferences, social inclusion of all genres and capacities

- Develop their critical thinking, their imagination and the sense of taking the initiative in speaking about and being active in creating the collective future that they'd like to see
- Widen the student's perspectives on what is possible, open-mindedness and techniques to think of solutions



NATURE

Extract from p5 on the Seasons tribe's mission to restore New Earth :

“The plant research underway in the remote enclosures of New Earth was taking time. Each species had to be monitored for several years before being validated to be reintroduced into the Earth's hostile environment. It was important to study the potential consequences of life form adaptation and avoid unnecessary suffering should any of the plants or animals not manage to survive. The Seasons were ever hopeful that nature would revive on New Earth once again. They believed that man cannot live without being in harmony with nature. That the lands would once again be populated by humans but the process was long and not all the results were promising. The order in which the organisms were reintroduced would be crucial. They were preparing the most massive experiments of permaculture ever imagined, but there was little other choice, they had to succeed.”

- **Definition of nature** : The phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations (Oxford Language)

- **Definition of permaculture** : "Permaculture uses the inherent qualities of plants and animals combined with the natural characteristics of landscapes and structures to produce a life-supporting system for city and country, using the smallest practical area." Bill Mollison
- **Question** : What do you think about the movements to save the environment? Is it really a big deal? What do you understand from the definition of permaculture? Why create life-supporting systems? Imagine what might that look like and share your thoughts.

Extract from p87 where Jessriah is explaining the principles of biomimicing :

"Seasons tribespeople are naturally driven by the cycle of nature, given our gifts we learn to adapt to the environment around us as you know. The closer we look at how nature works, the better we understand how to imitate nature's ways and the more in harmony we feel. It's called biomimicing."

"I certainly noticed when I'm not in harmony!" said Draydon raising his eyebrows as he thought back to the moment when the skin on his hands had started flaking away or an awkward situation where his body hadn't adapted well.

Jessriah continued "There were groups of scientists and philosophers who researched and proved the benefits of biomimicing even before the environmental cataclysm. They studied the patterns and ways of working together that nature has created over thousands of years so that it can function effectively, evolve and thrive, "life principles". These principles were taught by Kekoa and Kaleo to others and they truly live by them. In doing so we developed the faculties of adaptation that we have today, as our "natural intelligence" grew. While you are here I would encourage you to watch and study those patterns as much as possible. The perfection that exists in nature can be quite astonishing. We can learn so much to continue evolving."

DIVERSITY

- **Definition** : The state of being diverse; variety (Oxford Languages).
- **Question** : What areas of life have diversity? Do you think diversity is important everywhere? Explain your answer.

Extract from the book p41 which introduces Lemaria and why diversity was important in creating the first Seasons settlements :

"Who's Lemaria?" asked Draydon.

"She's the most senior elder of our settlement, a second generation Season. She's also the daughter of Devon, the founder of Reviathan."

"I think I have heard of her," replied Draydon "wasn't she involved in establishing the Seasons settlements in the Northern plains of Reviathan when everyone else went West?"

"Yes, she's a strong woman," said Melodia "she wouldn't settle for anything less than ground which was capable of supporting people to thrive, not just survive, with as much diversity and celebration of life as possible. So we live gratefully in this rich environment thanks to her."

Extract from the book p92 where Jessriah is explaining how nothing is 'rubbish' in nature :

"Ok. I can get a bit over the top in defending 'vegetable rights'," Jessriah laughed and then she held her head high and added "but we should not underestimate how important these things are in protecting our Seasons tribe values and our future resource use."

"Nature's mature and intelligent organisms work based on the principles of cooperation and diversity, as I said, they use their rubbish as materials, they find their resources locally, they don't try to maximise but rather optimise. Their energy comes 99% from solar source, they bounce back after shocks (meaning they're resilient) and they certainly don't over-exploit the use of other resources in their environment - they use only what they need. Because of this they thrive. This is how things work around here. Clever no?"

RESEARCH

- **Definition** : the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions (Oxford Languages).
- **Question** : Why might research be a good idea? When is it not necessary? Why do you think the Seasons carry out so much research on plant and animal species? What might the founders of Reviathan researched?

Extract from p66 where Kekoa is talking about the researchers and idealists who came together to imagine Reviathan :

"This eccentric group of researchers came together quite organically with one idealist recruiting another. Soon enough there were over forty members: ecologists, geologists, philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists, theologians, biologists... you name it, they were there to add their viewpoint. As a young urban planner who found himself by chance in the middle of all of this diversity, it was fascinating for me. What made this group special, however, was their ability to incorporate other's ideas and knowledge into their own in order to create something richer, just like the Sparks tribespeople do now. They were not stuck in the idea that their own way of doing things was the best, or that their expertise was better than any other person's. All were intent on using the richness of their experience to build a better future, one that was focused on raising humanity's well-being whilst living in total harmony with nature. What would that look like? What was every person's place in that ecosystem?"

Kekoa's eyes widened with hope as he thought back to that moment.

"Together we opened so many questions about who we had become as human beings and who we wanted to be? Complaining or analysing how we had got to being out so incredibly out of balance with nature was less important than finding a good path back to the harmony that we needed and understanding how to repair the damage done. We all knew that we were running out of time. We could sense the urgency of the environmental cataclysm that was coming upon us."

CULTIVATING EMPATHY

CHAPTER 1

1. What activities are the Seasons tribe responsible for managing? How do they view the future of New Earth? (they manage food and natural resource growth. They believe that New Earth can flourish again if they help Mother Nature to regenerate)
2. Why was Draydon sad? (because he had just lost his mentor Kaleo, who he cared for a lot)
3. Who was Kaleo? What did he say about people's gifts (He was an ethnologue and philosopher who contributed to founding Reviathan. He would say to people : "Our gifts are precious. They are there to be cultivated, just like nature blooms. If we leave them to disarray then they will become as barren as a garden with no more seeds.")
4. What was the Seasons tribe's special gift? (they could mimic different living organisms and creatures' abilities)
5. How did Draydon react to the sadness and overwhelm he was feeling? (he felt hot and nauseous, he began shaking and his skin began to dry up and fall away)
6. What did he do? (he felt embarrassed so he went to shelter in a nearby Baobab tree)
7. What can we learn from lizards? ("The lizard is an interesting creature" he said "it simply adapts to whatever situation it finds itself in. It does not complain, it does not over-think, it does not try to be something else unlike its cousin the chameleon. No it simply accepts that which is here and now, and it evolves.)
8. Why does Draydon feel lost? (he feels suffocated and like he doesn't feel part of the community, nor does he want to be part of it)
9. What does his father recommend? (going to their cabin in the hills to have time to himself to think)
10. Who does he meet on the way and what does he suggest to Draydon? (Bane, who is returning from the mines of New Earth. He suggests to visit Kekoa for guidance and to learn more about the Seasons tribe origins)
11. What does he give to Draydon? (a ceremonial flute of peace with different bird feathers attached to it)
12. What did Draydon dream about when he was at the cabin? (a stag : "as the sun was starting to rise, he found himself standing alone on a hill, thick with vegetation. A stag was poised in a clearing nearby looking back at him. Its eyes were wide with anticipation but its stance was firm and proud. It strutted several times left and right and then stamped its hoof firmly on the ground. Draydon saw a ripple of air form into a wave which reverberated across the forest around it. The waves that it created washed over every rock, leaf and tree in its vicinity, and with it, silence. The stag, the lord of the forest, was imposing harmony and rebalance on its surroundings. Draydon looked on in awe at its calm dominance as it continued to stare deeply at him."

13. What does Draydon enjoy doing at the cabin? (playing music, improvising by using the objects around him as drums etc)
14. Where did Draydon discover that his family came from and why did he feel grateful to Kekoa? (France. Kekoa had warned his grandfather about the need to migrate because of impending environmental catastrophes)

CHAPTER 2

1. What happened when Draydon played the flute? (a magpie appeared)
2. Who was watching Draydon and what happened when he saw her? (Rethia. She ran and then turned cartwheels)
3. How did Retira tell Draydon her name and why? (she drew it in the air, telling him that she preferred to write or use sign language because she didn't find the right words sometimes)
4. Where does she take him and why? What was the distraction? (to the Outliers camp where she lives because they saw flashes and wanted to find out if anyone knew the cause. It was the Sparks performing fusions)
5. Describe how most Seasons camps were organised. (Like termites. Each group has a different role to play. Termites know from birth what their role is and there is an innate trust that each will do what is necessary without the need to tell them what to do. They are what is called 'stigmergic'. There is of course a termite queen but no boss. She simply ensures that the termitary survives by laying millions of eggs. Each termite is autonomous and almost as if it has simple, clear instructions, it knows what to do."
6. Why was the Outliers cam different? Where would you prefer to live? (it was festive, joyous, even electric! There were movie memorabilia everywhere.)
7. What does Rethia take Draydon to see? How is it made? (Land art, created by assembling natural objects from the area around them into a beautiful design)

SELF REFLECTION

1. What did you like about Draydon? Was there anything you found it hard to understand about his behaviour? What about Rethia?
2. What similar qualities do you have to Draydon?
3. Do you find yourself needing a lot of quiet time alone?
4. Do you like to research deeply into subjects that interest you?
5. Do you like responsibility or do you prefer to work independently?
6. Do you like that tasks are made clear and then you have the freedom to complete them?
7. Do you find yourself spending time dreaming up new possibilities or thinking deeply about things?

EXERCISES TO THINK ABOUT DIVERSITY

CREATIVE WRITING

“What do you most like about The Seasons special abilities? What is your favourite discovery about nature?”

COLLABORATIVE SHARING

This exercise is fun and encourages students to think about the impacts of diversity. Go around each person in the class to share something about their experience or themselves that makes them unique (eg birthmarks, origins, travel, how they learnt something, their family...). Can we see the richness that these differences create in our class and therefore in society?

FURTHER READING

Reviathan Book 1 : The Sparks
Reviathan Book 3 : The Snows
Reviathan Book 4 : The Streams
Reviathan Book 5 : The Sunsets
Reviathan Book 6 : The Stars

The teen “conscious” fiction series Reviathan is available for purchase on Amazon. More information available at www.nadiajoynson.com/reviathan.